

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 5:6-8** Chapter 26- Understanding and Valuing the Doctrine of the Trinity 234 Our Triune God Part 6

WAOY Thursday 08/14/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today we're going to continue to look at what John taught about "The Doctrine of the Trinity". So, let's open our Bibles and read **1John 5:6-8**- again together:

6 This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

7 For there are three that testify:

8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

Now on the last broadcast- we were going over just how important it is for the Church to know and to rightly preach Who Jesus is. For almost five chapters- the Apostle John has been teaching us that there are four things that are essential to being a Christian:

1. Love of God and for God
2. Keeping God's Commandments
3. Loving the Brethren
4. A Correct Understanding of Who Jesus is

And all throughout this Epistle- these are the four areas that John constantly points out as being the hallmarks of genuine Christianity. And in this Passage- John is once again reminding us that even if we love God; even if we keep God's Commandments; and even if we love the brethren- even if we do all three of these things and if our understanding of Jesus is not true- then there is great doubt about whether or not we are truly saved.

So contrary to what is being taught today- it really matters *what* we believe and it matters *why* we believe it. And those who desire to love and serve God need to know Divine Absolute Truth. And they need to know the *reason* why they believe what they believe. As I have said many times on these broadcasts- what you believe translates into how you live. Right beliefs *always* leads to right living and wrong beliefs *always* leads to wrong living because human beings *cannot* live- long term- contrary to what they believe. So there is no such thing as being strong in the Lord and having false beliefs or partial Truth in your life. You cannot walk in the Spirit and you cannot please the Lord while believing unbiblical things about Jesus. Having false beliefs or having partial truths in your belief system means, by default, that you are weak and that you are not strong.

So overcoming the world as John showed us in verse 4 depends on a right and full and Biblical understanding of Who Jesus is. And please permit me to illustrate just how important all this is. There was a time in Church History when the very issue that John speaks about right here in this Passage came under very severe attack from within the Church and Christianity nearly lost its Biblical understanding of Who Jesus is.

A group of men rose up in the fourth century from within the Church who attacked the Deity of Jesus Christ head on. This was the most serious attack against the Person of Christ that the Church had seen up until that time. And this attack nearly overwhelmed the Church due in part to the Church's unwillingness to fight against it.

You see, beloved, right before the Roman army came and destroyed the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem in 70AD.- the half- brother of Jesus Christ- Jude- wrote his small Epistle of 25 verses to the Church. **The Epistle of Jude** is the only Book in the entire Bible that deals exclusively with the issue of false doctrine; false teachers; heresy; and heretics. Read with me what Jude wrote in verse 4 of his Epistle:

For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Now here in this verse- Jude warns the Church- some 20 years *before* John wrote **1John**- that certain men- not everybody- but certain

persons will creep into the Church under the guise of being prophets or apostles or teachers. And these people will bring in what Jude calls “filthy” dreams and elaborate and detailed visions and prophecies that they say are new direct revelations from God. And these ungodly men will deceive unstable and weak souls.

Jude says here that these certain men were “**long beforehand marked out for this condemnation**”. And Jude says that these people will attack Biblical Christianity along three very foundational lines:

1. The Grace of God
2. The Character and Nature of God the Father
3. The Person of Jesus Christ in either His Deity or His Humanity

Now a few years ago- I went over this Epistle very slowly in a very detailed and thorough examination and I have those CD’s available for you- so if you would like the teaching on the Epistle of Jude- call or write me and I will get them out to you.

Now many people consider what is going on *outside* the Church- in the culture or in politics or in world events to be the most important problem that we face as believers- but that is not true. Every time the Church is persecuted or fought from *without*- the people of the Church actually become stronger and more determined than ever to be faithful and true to Jesus Christ. For example- in the **Book of Acts** when Christianity was illegal and when being a Christian might well cost you everything you owned- including your life- the Church experienced unprecedented growth in both numbers and in power with God.

This proves that it isn’t the straight and narrow path that keeps people away from Jesus; it isn’t the preaching of damnation or the life of self- denial that keeps people away from Jesus. It isn’t even the threat of persecution or the possibility of losing everything you own- up to and including your life- that stops people from coming to Jesus. No, Salvation is so magnificent and having our sins washed away is so wonderful and unworthy people are so grateful for eternal life through Jesus- that they will gladly suffer for the Name of Jesus.

No, what keeps people away from Jesus is people inside the Church who do not teach rightly or people inside the Church who do not live rightly- that is what keeps people away.

So when attacks come from within- from sinful Church leaders or

from false teaching- then the people of the Church are demoralized and weakened and the Church is left with much to try to clean up.

In verse 4 of his Epistle- Jude says that these ungodly people will creep into the Church – under the radar- and like spiritual terrorists- and they will lie in wait in sleeper cells so they can blow up their dirty bombs of false teaching inside the Church.

And we saw in that study that there are seven major roots of all the heresies that have plagued the Church over the 2,000 year history of Christianity. And these seven major heresies are the foundation for the many thousands of false teachings that have risen up since the Upper Room. And all of them attack Biblical Christianity from one of those three areas- the Grace of God; the Character and Nature of God the Father; or the Person of Jesus Christ by either denying Christ's Deity or His Humanity.

Now back in the fourth Century- there arose a group of people from *inside* the Church led by a man named Arius- who began to teach wrongly about Jesus.

The Arians- as they became known- taught that Jesus was certainly more than a mere man- but they also taught that Jesus was less than God. And this, in effect, made Jesus to be a *created* being- someone Who was created by God at some point after Creation. And that contradicts what John said about Jesus in **John 1:1,2 &14** which says:

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He was in the beginning with God.

14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

So the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of the living God says that Jesus was God and so Jesus was “with God” from the very beginning. But Arius- like all heretics and false teachers- put much more emphasis on what they said the Spirit told them- rather than what the Holy Scripture reveals about Jesus.

And as you follow the teachings of Arianism out to its inevitable conclusion, you see that they taught that Jesus was not Deity at all- but was merely angelic and so they teach that Jesus was Michael the arch-angel in the Old Testament.

Now of all the ancient heresies, this one nearly won- because it almost took over the Church. And that is because the leaders of the Church back then didn't resist this false teaching until it was almost too late.

The heresy of Arianism was bold and blatant and was not hidden at all once it was allowed to enter into the Church. And the full Deity of Jesus Christ was attacked by these people with a ferocity like no other Christian Doctrine had ever been fought. And when presented with clear Scriptural proof of Christ's Divinity, the followers of Arius were unashamed in their answer. They said, *"If the Bible teaches that Christ was Divine, then the Bible is wrong because Arius has heard from God and we simply need to change the Bible"*.

In fact- it was, in large part, this boldness from the Arians that won over most of the Church leaders. The followers of Arius had no shame; no fear; and no remorse about teaching things that were contrary to Scripture. They were willing to rewrite the entire Bible if necessary so that the Bible would fit in with their Doctrine- and they made no bones about it. Their stated goal was to cause the Church to place the stamp of orthodoxy on their heresy that Christ was fully human, but was not Divine. And as I said, this boldness, in and of itself, was the reason that many fell into this heresy without question. They reasoned that if these people were wrong, then God would have convicted them or judged them. The Church leaders had forgotten that the Bible clearly teaches that some people who are not truly saved can go too far with God. Some people can presume upon the Grace of God until God turns them over to a reprobate mind. Paul wrote about these kind of people in **Romans 1:20-32**:

20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.

25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

26 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,

27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are* gossips,

30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,

31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;

32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

So we must not be taken back by the boldness of heretics and atheists today. These people are able to get to the place where God no longer deals with them. And their mission in life is not to seek after and understand Divine Truth- it is simply to tear up the Church of God.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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